



Security Council

PROVISIONAL

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ENGLISH

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE THREE THOUSAND
TWO HUNDRED AND SIXTY-EIGHTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 24 August 1993, at 5.10 p.m.

President: Mrs. ALBRIGHT

(United States of America)

Members:

Brazil
Cape Verde
China
Djibouti
France
Hungary
Japan
Morocco
New Zealand
Pakistan
Russian Federation
Spain
United Kingdom of Great Britain
and Northern Ireland
Venezuela

Mr. SARDENBERG
Mr. JESUS
Mr. LI Zhaoning
Mr. OLMAYE
Mr. MERIMEE
Mr. MOLNAR
Mr. HATANO
Mr. BENJELLOUN-TOUIMI
Mr. KEATING
Mr. MARKER
Mr. VORONTSOV
Mr. YAÑEZ-BARNUEVO

Mr. RICHARDSON
Mr. ARRIA

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The meeting was called to order at 5.10 p.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

THE SITUATION IN GEORGIA

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL IN PURSUANCE OF SECURITY COUNCIL
RESOLUTION 849 (1993) (S/26250)

The PRESIDENT: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on the agenda.

The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General in pursuance of Security Council resolution 849 (1993), documents S/26250 and S/26250/Add.1, and two letters, dated 4 and 6 August 1993, respectively, from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council, contained in documents S/26254 and S/26264.

Members of the Council also have before them document S/26348, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's prior consultations.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour: Brazil, Cape Verde, China, Djibouti, France, Hungary, Japan, Morocco, New Zealand, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Venezuela

The PRESIDENT: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has therefore been adopted unanimously as resolution 858 (1993).

(The President)

I shall now call upon those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Mr. MERIMÉE (France) (interpretation from French): The situation in Georgia is of concern to the French Government, which is following very closely the efforts of the parties to find a solution to the Abkhaz conflict. The parties have managed, since the Sochi Agreement of 27 July last, to set up their own tripartite machinery to monitor the cease-fire, and we welcome this. The parties have turned to the Security Council to obtain United Nations involvement to provide a form of backing for the peace-keeping operations carried out locally.

After Liberia, just recently, the Council is once again faced with a situation that is new to it, which consists in the United Nations intervening on the ground alongside other, regional players. This type of action poses a number of problems, in particular the problem of delimiting precisely who has what responsibilities. The Secretariat has provided the explanations we desired concerning the mandate of the United Nations military observers in Abkhazia. My delegation welcomes the fact that the resolution adopted today provides for a regular review of the operational provisions for implementing that mandate in the light of the progress made towards establishing a lasting peace.

The other essential element, in our view, is the start to a process of negotiating a political settlement. My delegation regrets the lack of precise provisions for convening an international conference under United Nations auspices. In that regard, we expect the parties to make, soon, formal commitments towards that end.

Mr. VORONTSOV (Russian Federation) (interpretation from Russian):

We believe that the adoption of the resolution establishing the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia is an important step that enables the United Nations to render real assistance to the efforts to implement the Agreement on a cease-fire in Abkhazia and on the setting up of compliance monitoring machinery - the Agreement signed in Sochi on 27 July this year - and, as a whole, to the political settlement of the protracted conflict in Abkhazia, Republic of Georgia.

I should like once again to emphasize here the very great significance of the Sochi Agreement, which contains solutions to the key problems that have for a long time hindered the achievement of agreements capable of halting the protracted bloodshed. The document signed in Sochi establishes a real basis for ensuring a stable cease-fire and the shift to the next stage: working out a comprehensive political settlement to the conflict in Abkhazia.

As we know, the Agreement makes provision for active assistance from the international community in normalizing the situation in Abkhazia. The presence of United Nations observers - the Russian side is convinced - is of extreme political and practical importance. It is vitally necessary for effectively ensuring the stability of the cease-fire regime and strict compliance with the other provisions of the Sochi Agreement of 27 July. Incidentally, the assessment of the Russian representative to the joint settlement commission is that the measures provided for by the Sochi Agreement have already been 80 per cent fulfilled.

(Mr. Vorontsov, Russian Federation)

The leadership of the Republic of Georgia also attaches very great significance to the most rapid deployment possible of the United Nations Observer Mission in the Abkhaz conflict zone. The Head of State of Georgia, Eduard Shevardnadze, who has just had useful talks in Moscow, has called the participation of international observers an important factor in ensuring that the conflict in Abkhazia does not flare up again.

In this connection, we express our gratitude to the United Nations Secretariat for deploying an advance team of observers in Abkhazia in implementation of Security Council resolution 854 (1993). The team immediately became involved in working to observe the implementation of the highest priority measures provided for by the 27 July Agreement, quickly organized cooperation with the other monitoring bodies and became an important constituent part of the mechanism for monitoring the implementation of the provisions of the Sochi Agreement.

(Mr. Vorontsov,
Russian Federation)

The Russian Federation agrees with the concept, approved in the resolution, of the Observer Mission to monitor the cease-fire in Abkhazia, and with the size of the mission, which has been set at up to 88 military observers. We believe that this is the absolute minimum number to carry out effectively the great volume of tasks facing the Mission.

The resolution adopted by the Security Council concerning the establishment of a United Nations Observer Mission in Abkhazia must be implemented in the next few days. The Secretariat has done a colossal amount of work each day in preparing the Mission, and in detailed planning of the various aspects of its activities, particularly those related to the interaction of the international observers with the other monitoring groups on site.

We should like to express to the Secretariat our profound gratitude for that work. We also earnestly request the Secretariat to conclude this work and send at least the first group of observers approved in the resolution to the conflict zone within the next few days. We are convinced that it is possible. Time will not wait.

Mr. RICHARDSON (United Kingdom): I will make only three brief points.

First, we warmly welcome the passage of this resolution, and we look to the earliest possible dispatch of the main body of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) to Georgia. We are encouraged that the parties concerned have already made much progress in implementing the cease-fire agreement, and we look to the arrival of UNOMIG to consolidate the cease-fire agreement and achieve its full implementation.

(Mr. Richardson, United Kingdom)

Secondly, the cease-fire agreement itself contains a number of detailed provisions for the interaction of UNOMIG, the tripartite monitors and the Joint Commission. The relationship between these three bodies is not always entirely clear, but will no doubt become so in the light of experience. That is why my delegation attaches particular importance to the provision in our resolution whereby the Council decides to keep under constant review the operational arrangements set out in this mandate, and to revert to them if necessary in the light of any recommendations the Secretary-General may make. The various agreements may need some fine tuning and might benefit from greater precision as to who does what.

Thirdly, and perhaps most important of all we have a cease-fire agreement, but we do not yet have a comprehensive political settlement. It is not the first time that this has happened, and it probably will not be the last, but it helps to explain why my delegation attaches the greatest importance to the early initiation of negotiations for a comprehensive political settlement, and I very much hope that we shall all be able to encourage the parties to meet as rapidly as possible. Suggestions have been made for meetings in Geneva in September, but whatever the time, venue or format the Council should be aiming to encourage the rapid conclusion of a comprehensive political settlement, without which a cease-fire agreement may well not work over time.

Mr. MOLNAR (Hungary): The delegation of the Republic of Hungary would like to express its firm conviction that the comprehensive United Nations efforts aimed at solving the complex issue of peace in Georgia have reached a decisive phase.

At the present juncture, we are looking forward to establishing a United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG). As the Secretariat's response

(Mr. Molnar, Hungary)

to questions raised by the Security Council puts it very well,

"... if the peace process is to be successful, it is of the utmost importance that the cease-fire should continue to hold and be effectively monitored by UNOMIG".

We believe that resolutions 849 (1993) and 854 (1993) have created a solid framework for the parties to find the way towards a peaceful solution to this problem. Our delegation appreciates the Secretary-General's efforts to launch a peace process involving the parties to the conflict.

We would like to voice our hope that the Secretary-General's report dated 6 August 1993 and the questions that members of the Security Council raised concerning its contents, as well as the detailed and careful information the Secretary-General presented in response to those questions, will provide us with a sound basis for formulating our opinion concerning the situation in Georgia in general, and the establishment of a United Nations Observer Mission in particular.

The information on the cease-fire agreement of 27 July between the Government of Georgia and the Abkhaz authorities in Gudauta, through the mediation of the representative of the Russian Federation, gave a new impetus to our hope that a just and peaceful settlement is achievable. That hope was reinforced when we learned of - again I refer to the Secretariat's paper:

"the generally favourable impression, which the Secretariat's representatives have gained, regarding the progress in the implementation of the cease-fire agreement".

We support the Secretariat's opinion that

"... the purpose of the negotiating efforts under the auspices of the United Nations will be to find a comprehensive political settlement acceptable to the parties in conflict ...".

(Mr. Molnar, Hungary)

The Hungarian delegation supports the Security Council's efforts to help elaborate a workable, peaceful solution to the crisis. That is why we share the views of those who are in favour of sending the observer group to Georgia.

Finally, we are convinced that the resolution which the Council has just adopted is a carefully elaborated and well balanced contribution to the long and arduous process of bringing peace back to the heavily tried land of Georgia.

The PRESIDENT: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of the United States.

The United States warmly welcomes the Council's decision to dispatch an Observer Mission to Georgia to help monitor the cease-fire that was agreed upon recently. We attach great significance to the opportunity this cease-fire agreement represents for real and lasting progress towards a durable political settlement to the conflict and the contribution that peace in this instance could make towards peace in the region.

The Observer Mission can play a vital role in helping to create the conditions necessary for genuine and substantive peace negotiations to proceed. The Mission cannot, of course, guarantee the success of peace negotiations. That can be accomplished only by the parties to the conflict, with international encouragement and assistance. We anticipate that if the parties approach the maintenance of the cease-fire and the establishment of a genuine negotiating process with the same political courage as they have brought to agreeing on a cease-fire, the need for an Observer Mission will be of shorter, rather than longer, duration.

(The President)

We want one thing to be clear. The Observer Mission can operate effectively only if the parties to the conflict have the political will to resolve their differences by negotiation. If that will should be absent, we would see no justification for prolonging the Mission.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 5.25 p.m.